



Sacred Heart School

English as an Additional Language Policy

At Sacred Heart School we all aspire to provide a happy, safe and secure environment in which every child is encouraged to achieve their full potential.

This policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in EYFS.

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Statement of Intent

Sacred Heart School is committed to providing a happy, safe and secure environment in which every child is encouraged to achieve their full potential. We believe that every child is created in the image and likeness of God and is called to flourish.

We recognise that pupils who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL) bring rich linguistic and cultural experiences that enhance our school community. Bilingualism and multilingualism are valued as strengths and assets.

Definition of EAL

A pupil is considered to have English as an Additional Language if they are exposed to a language at home that is known or believed to be other than English.

EAL pupils may:

- Be newly arrived in the UK
- Have been born in the UK but speak another language at home
- Be fluent in spoken English but developing academic language
- Be literate in another language
- Have limited prior education

EAL is not a special educational need, although some pupils with EAL may also have SEND.

Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current version)
- Statutory Framework for the EYFS
- National Curriculum guidance

This policy should be read alongside:

- Inclusion Policy
- SEND Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Assessment Policy

The Governing Body has oversight responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy.

Aims

The school aims to:

- Promote equality of access to the curriculum
- Remove barriers to learning for EAL pupils
- Raise achievement and aspirations
- Celebrate cultural and linguistic diversity
- Support rapid acquisition of English while valuing home language
- Foster belonging, confidence and participation

At Sacred Heart School, we believe:

- All teachers are teachers of language.
- Language development is central to learning across the curriculum.
- Academic language proficiency takes significantly longer to develop than conversational fluency.
- Pupils' home languages are recognised, respected and encouraged.
- EAL pupils are entitled to the full curriculum.
- High expectations are maintained for all pupils.

We recognise that conversational English may develop within 1–2 years, while academic proficiency may take up to 5–10 years.

Teaching and Learning

Effective provision for EAL pupils includes:

- Explicit teaching of vocabulary and language structures
- Use of visual aids and modelling
- Structured opportunities for speaking and listening
- Pre-teaching key vocabulary
- Sentence stems and scaffolding
- Collaborative learning approaches
- Clear, simplified instructions

Teachers identify and address language demands within all subjects.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils, regardless of language background, have equal access to learning and wider school life. Provision is adapted where necessary to support individual needs, including those with SEND.

Assessment and Monitoring

All EAL pupils are assessed in line with the school's assessment procedures.

- Baseline assessments are carried out on entry
- English proficiency is assessed using The Bell Foundation framework
- Progress is monitored regularly
- Teachers distinguish between language proficiency and subject understanding

Monitoring includes planning scrutiny, pupil voice, and progress reviews with senior leaders.

EYFS Provision

In EYFS and early KS1:

- Children may still be developing their first language alongside English
- Play-based learning supports language acquisition
- Oral language development is prioritised
- Assessment is sensitive to language development stage

Safeguarding and Wellbeing

The school recognises that pupils with EAL may be more vulnerable, particularly on arrival.

Staff will:

- Ensure safeguarding information is accessible to families
- Use interpreters or translated materials where appropriate
- Monitor wellbeing and integration
- Follow safeguarding procedures at all times

Parental Engagement

The school values strong partnerships with parents and carers.

- Communication will be clear and accessible
- Where possible, translation support will be provided
- Parents are encouraged to maintain home language
- Guidance is offered on supporting learning at home

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

- Monitors effectiveness of the policy
- Ensures compliance with legislation

Headteacher

- Oversee implementation of the policy
- Ensure staff training and awareness
- Monitor outcomes for EAL pupils

EAL Lead

- Supports staff with planning and strategies
- Monitors progress and attainment
- Leads assessment processes
- Provides guidance and resources

Class Teachers

- Plan inclusive lessons with clear language objectives
- Teach subject-specific vocabulary
- Assess and track progress
- Maintain high expectations

Monitoring and Review

The policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required due to changes in legislation.

Monitoring includes:

- Pupil progress and attainment
- Inclusion in wider school life
- Staff training needs
- Feedback from pupils and parents